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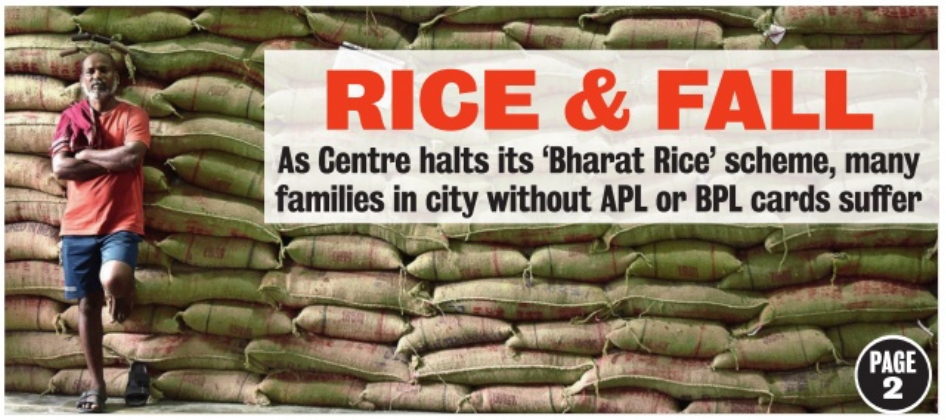
Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 20 | Humidity 73% Scattered Thunderstorms Sensex 79,996 | Nifty 24,323 | Gold 72,911 | Silver 92,984 | Dollar 83.55 | Euro 90.43 | GBP 106.71



RICE & FALL

As Centre halts its 'Bharat Rice' scheme, many families in city without APL or BPL cards suffer

PAGE 2

ROCK BOTTOM

Illegal borewell digging, urbanisation blamed as groundwater levels plummet across Bengaluru

PAGE 5

As dengue cases rise, BBMP spreading awareness among public about keeping surroundings clean, but itself has done nothing to ensure vacant sites are dry and garbage free

STING OPERATION: BITE OF THE VACANT SITE

Identify black spots, issue notices to owners to keep site clean, suggest citizens

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The State Health Department and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) have been taking measures to create awareness among the public on the importance of keeping surroundings clean to prevent the spread of dengue fever in the city. Both the departments deserve a pat on the back for this. However, many citizens are wondering when the BBMP would pull up its socks to eliminate black spots around the city that are turning breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

To begin with, citizens insist that the BBMP start identifying all vacant sites and spots that are known for water stagnation during the monsoon. After this, the real work begins -- BBMP would have to make sure all the garbage and stagnant water is cleared from these vacant sites. For this, the cost can be collected along with property tax from the land owners, they suggest.

As a case in point is a vacant site on 5th Main Road of Gandhinagar, near MTR, that was dug up a few years ago for construction of a structure. After the digging, construction work is yet to begin, but each times it rains water gets collected here.

The vacant site has also become a destination for people to dump of all types of waste.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

Black spot on the flyover near the pedestrian subway at Kempegowda Bus Station; (Inset) A vacant site full of garbage on 5th Main of Gandhinagar

"What is the use of organising awareness programmes on dengue fever without addressing the problem of black spots and mosquito breeding places?

— Jagadeesh K, citizen

Accident-prone

Things go south in the North

North Bengaluru epicentre of accident deaths for past three years

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

North Bengaluru is becoming an epicentre of accidents in the city with 146 accident deaths in the division and with the most number of accident deaths for the past three years. Traffic officials say that they are witnessing deaths even in cases of riders wearing ISI helmets.

As many as 2,040 accidents have been reported within Bengaluru limits in 2024 and 376 accident deaths until June of this year. Out of these, a majority have been reported from the North Traffic division with 624 cases. Of these, 142 were fatal and 482 were non-fatal cases; 146 people died in accidents and 534 were injured.

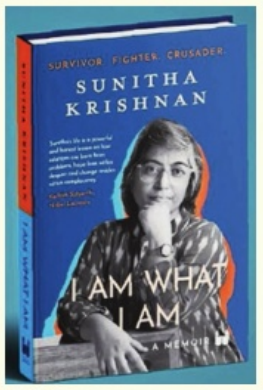
In the North Division, the North East sub division accounted for most of the cases and most people dying with 396 cases in which 95 people died. Major accidents that resulted in death were seen within the International Airport (27) and Yelahanka (24) traffic jurisdiction.

The trend is consistent with data from 2022 and 2023 as well. In 2022, 1,189 cases were registered and there were 265 deaths. In 2023, there were 1,535 cases registered and there were 337 accident deaths. Between 2022 and 2023, there has been a 27.16 per cent increase in accident deaths in the North Division alone.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Book Launch

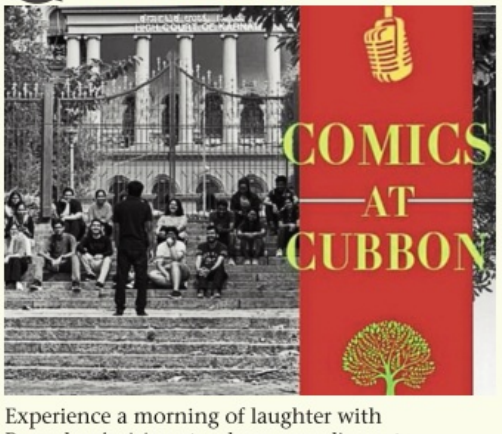


Get inspired by stories of survival and triumph at the Book Launch: "I Am What I Am" written by social activist and author Sunitha Krishna. Her book delves into her journey and highlights her unwavering determination to confront and combat sex trafficking in India. The author shares the many challenges she faced and her belief in a higher power that kept her mission going. The book offers a powerful testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the impact one individual can make in confronting overwhelming darkness. **Where: Bangalore International Centre; When: July 9, 6:30 Pm to 8:00 Pm**

02 Sculptor's tribute

Join Tapati Guha-Thakurta for a talk on her just-published edited volume, 'From the Depth of the Mould: Meera Mukherjee (1923-1998), A Centenary Tribute.' One of the most prolific sculptors of late 20th century India, Meera Mukherjee chose a mode of metal sculpting and a lifestyle that set her apart from most other artists of her time. It uses the metaphor of Meera Mukherjee's elaborate mould-making and metal-casting process to look closely at the themes of material and technique, individual and community work, struggle and resilience in her life story. **Where: Museum of Art and Photography; When: July 12, 6 pm**

03 Humour hour



Experience a morning of laughter with Bangalore's rising stand-up comedians at the Stand-Up Comedy Open Mic hosted by EarthlingsComedyTheatre. Enjoy fresh and classic material from talented performers. Don't miss out on the fun. **Where: Cubbon Park; When: July 14 to September 8, 8:30 Am**

Families distraught as rice scheme halted

Central government's scheme, launched to provide affordable rice, wheat flour, and lentils, has been temporarily suspended; causing inconvenience to many, especially those without BPL or APL cards

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The central government's ambitious 'Bharat Rice' scheme, which aimed to provide quality rice at a lower price, has been temporarily suspended. Launched on February 2, 2024, the scheme offered rice at Rs 29 per kilogram, wheat flour at Rs 27.50 per kilogram, and lentils at Rs 60 per kilogram to provide affordable food to the poor. The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) was responsible for the distribution. Initially, rice and wheat flour were distributed through temporary outlets, with plans to include lentils later. However, lentil distribution did not commence, and the supply of all items has now been halted.

A source said that the scheme, intended to provide relief to the poor during the Lok Sabha election season, had benefited many families. However, many others, particularly those without BPL or APL cards, were not eligible and faced challenges in accessing affordable, quality food. The suspension of the scheme has caused inconvenience to numerous people.

The 'Bharat Rice' scheme utilised mobile vans to sell rice, wheat flour, and lentils across various parts of the state, including Bengaluru. According to the Karnataka division of NAFED, 5,000 tons of these commodities have been sold thus far. The demand for Bharat rice was notably high, with distribution taking place through mobile vans and select malls such as Reliance Mart. In Bengaluru, sales were conducted at locations including the NAFED office premises near Mount Carmel College. In selected districts, lentils were sold at Rs 60 per kilogram, with a 5-kilogram bag available for Rs 300.

> **"Last year's crop was affected by drought, resulting in decreased production. Hence the scheme is temporarily suspended** – sources

"This government initiative aimed to provide subsidised rice, wheat flour, and lentils to the public, and has seen significant popularity and success, distributing 5,000 tons of grains to date across various locations. However, last year's rice crop was affected by drought, resulting in decreased production. In this situation, distributing rice at Rs 29 per kilogram places a significant burden on the government. Since this scheme is being implemented nationwide, ensuring a steady supply is challenging. Consequently, the scheme has been temporarily suspended," according to sources.

Meanwhile, Vinay Kumar, Chief of the Karnataka Division of NAFED, stated, "Bharat rice is currently out of stock. It was available until mid-June, and distribution continued until the stock lasted. Since July 1, there has been no stock for distribution. The central government is now considering introducing a new policy for Bharat rice distribution. It remains to be seen what aspects will be included in the new policy." This statement highlights the current status of the Bharat rice scheme and indicates that a new policy is being developed by the central government. The specific details of the new policy have not yet been disclosed.

Reacting to this, Mahadevappa K, a vegetable seller said, "The Bharat rice scheme was a lifeline for many of us. Its sudden suspension has left us unsure of how we will manage our food expenses. We urge the government to expedite the introduction of the new policy to stabilise the market. For vulnerable communities, the Bharat rice scheme was crucial. Its suspension underscores the need for sustainable food security policies that prioritise the needs of the marginalised."

This initiative provided subsidised rice, wheat flour, and lentils, distributing 5,000 tons across various locations

Karnataka to decide new Bengaluru airport location soon

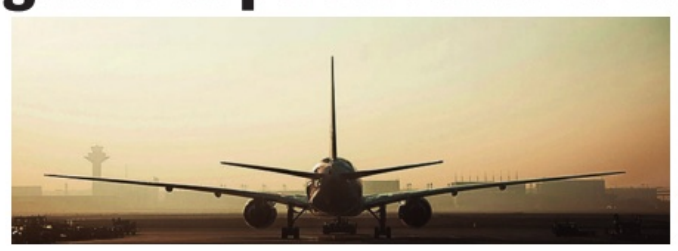
Karnataka Minister for Infrastructure MB Patil announced plans to convene a meeting soon to finalise the location for the city's proposed second airport. The government will prioritise factors such as passenger volume and connectivity to the existing Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) before making a decision.

"If we prioritise passenger load, areas such as Sarjapura and Kanakapura Road are strong contenders. On the other hand, if connectivity to the existing airport becomes a priority, places like Tumakuru and Dabaspet will be in the lead," Patil said.

"These considerations will be discussed in the next departmental meeting and further reviewed with the chief minister. The matter will also be taken up in the cabinet meeting," he said.

The exclusivity agreement with Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), which prohibits the establishment of another airport within a 150-kilometer radius, will expire in 2032, potentially paving the way for a new airport by 2033. Karnataka's Infrastructure Minister noted that given the time needed for land acquisition and compensation, the government has begun the planning phase.

Highlighting that major cities like New York and London have multiple airports nearby, he said, "In Mumbai, the distance between the two airports is 36 kilometres." Regarding the Tamil Nadu government's plans to construct an airport in Hosur, Patil highlighted the need to assess whether the exclusivity clause with BIAL applies in this case. Highlighting KIA as the third busiest airport in India after Delhi and Mumbai, the minister's office reported that the airport handled 37.5 million passengers and over 400,000 tonnes of cargo last year. The existing airport is expected to reach its maximum passenger handling capacity by 2033 and its peak cargo handling capacity by 2040. **– PTI**



KIA is India's third busiest airport after Delhi & Mumbai, saw 37.5M passengers & 400k tonnes of cargo last year

Of rowdy fans and vice on screen

Police go after goon fan pages as expert, citizens say pop culture's glorification of rowdyism sways youngsters

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The Bengaluru police have heightened their vigilance towards 'fan pages' following the murder of Renukaswamy, allegedly by a gang associated with actor Darshan. In response, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) is closely monitoring fan groups of the city's infamous rowdies and actors.

The police have observed a surge in social media accounts, particularly on Instagram, that glorify criminal behavior and rowdyism. These pages, boasting of thousands of followers, are promoting violence and enticing youth into criminal activities, police said. Notable among these are pages that celebrate notorious rowdies such as Wilson Garden Naga, Silent Sunil, and Cycle Ravi. The police are collaborating with the Cyber Crime Department to identify and remove these pages.

Pull a stunt

Not only this, citizens say that there are certain wheeling pages online too that should be monitored. "The glorification is not only limited to actors and rowdies, but also teenage boys who would engage in stunts on the road," said a resident.

Reports say that numerous complaints have been lodged against these pages, prompting police action to prevent the glorification of criminal figures. The authorities are now focused on blocking fan pages dedicated to history-sheeters.

This comes after several fan pages and fan clubs of actor Darshan are being sued for defamation and threatening. "Glorifying and making Gods of movie and sports celebrities is not new to our nation. It is important to note that although we like celebrities for whichever personal reason, we must abide by the law of land, any person regardless of their status and stature must comply with the law and respect it," said Hari, a cybersecurity professional.

Police had to resort to mild lathi charge to disperse fans as they milled around when Darshan was brought to court (File photo)

Hari said that it was unfortunate that though cinemas is extremely potent and powerful device to induce 'soft-power', the platform has mostly been celebrating toxic aspects which is not good for youth and at the same time, not good for following law, may it be drugs, violence at all degrees, vulgarity and general unethical behaviour.

"And it is further unfortunate that our youth get extremely influenced by this soft-power and it directly affects the law of the nation, and thereby the complete outlook of nation. This is serious, but, it is here to stay," said Hari.

Another citizen said that one must try to understand why the youth is awestruck by rowdies and gun violence. "It is mainly because of the glorification in popular culture like songs and movies. The consequences of engaging in such activities should be taught by parents and teachers. Also, the police is doing an excellent work in making sure that these pages don't glorify unlawful activities," they said.

'Teachers can't use myopic mindset while disciplining adolescents'

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The High Court while declining to interfere with a criminal case registered against two teachers for abetting the suicide of a girl student noted that "myopic or parochial mindset of teachers must undergo a paradigm shift" in disciplining adolescents. The teachers were accused of threatening and harassing the girl student for talking to a boy in the same school and citing their behaviour was meant to discipline the child.

"Boys and girls are in the same classroom; if they talk to each other or become friends, it is not understandable as to how such acts could become subversive of discipline," the court noted while adding that the case must become "an eye-opener towards such a paradigm shift".

The petition was filed by Roopesha, 34, a drawing teacher, and Sadananda, 44, a physical training teacher, working at a private school in Dharmasthala in Dakshina Kannada district. A case was registered against them under the provisions of the Indian Penal Code, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 in February, based on the dying declaration of the victim and the complaint raised by her mother.

A single judge bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna said, "The positive method of disciplining a child is only through motivation; the negative of it is in the manner that has become the subject matter of the present crime."

Background

One of the victim's classmates had received a WhatsApp message from the drawing teacher, commenting on the character of the victim, with regard to her talks with a boy who was also her classmate. When the victim tried to inquire with the drawing teacher, she was told to bring her parents without any explanations.

"A child of 14 years is undoubtedly in the thick of adolescent behaviour. Therefore, it is here that they need to be dealt with compassion and not in this manner. It must be remembered that times have changed, and change we must, according to the changing times

The physical education teacher, on the other hand, also present at the staff room at the time, told her that they had a video of her kissing the said boy.

The victim narrated the ordeal in her statement to the police and the child protection officer in the hospital and alleged that she took the extreme steps due to the conduct of her teachers.

The victim's mother has also held that the drawing teacher, despite being requested to discuss the matter with the victim's mother, went on to discuss it relentlessly with the classmates of the victim.

"A child of 14 years is undoubtedly in the thick of adolescent behaviour. Therefore, it is here that they need to be dealt with compassion and not in this manner. It must be remembered that times have changed, and change we must, according to the changing times," the court said.

The court also made it clear that its observations are limited to deciding the petition and should not influence either the investigation or the pending proceeding.

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Skydeck project may find its home in the outskirts

Tallest landmark initiative shifts away from the urban centre due to Defence Department objections, now exploring new locations; design plans are underway

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Officials are scouting locations outside the city center, factoring in Bengaluru's 920-metre elevation for the skydeck's design

The State Government's ambitious project to build India's tallest sky deck, initially planned for Bengaluru's city centre, has been relocated to the outskirts following objections from the Defence Department. The state government had planned to build a 250-metre-tall sky deck to offer a bird's-eye view of Bengaluru's landscape and position it as a prominent landmark. However, objections from the Defence Department and Air Force over security concerns resulted in the denial of permission for the project at its original location.

Initially, BBMP officials identified a vacant plot near HAL airport for the skydeck, but this location was rejected by the Defence Department. Subsequently, alternative sites in Kommaghatta, Jnana Bharathi, and Somapur were considered, but these too were dismissed due to security concerns. As a result, officials are now exploring locations further away from the city centre. The city's elevation of 920 metres above sea level will be taken into account in the skydeck's design. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the skydeck is being prepared using advanced technological equipment.

An official said, "The skydeck project is intended to provide a panoramic view of Bengaluru and serve as a major landmark. Due to the Defence Department's objections, the project has been relocated to the outskirts of the city, and officials are actively seeking suitable alternative sites for its construction. Hence now, the metro and road connections are being explored for the skydeck project. The state government had initially planned to build the skydeck near the HAL airport, but the defence department rejected this proposal, citing security concerns and potential risks to aircraft movement in the area." Recently, the Chief Minister and cabinet members received a briefing on the project but lacked detailed information. Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar has prepared a presentation to provide specifics about the skydeck and tunnel road projects, highlighting their successful implementation in several other countries. Officials have compiled comprehensive details and are prepared to present them to the Chief Minister and cabinet.

> **"Metro and road connections are being explored for the skydeck project. Because of security concerns the project is relocated** – Official

Following objections, officials are now exploring alternative locations for the skydeck. The final site is expected to be announced soon, with the project relocated to the city's outskirts to address security concerns.

Charkha spins again; BBMP vows to fix park issues

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It is quite heartening to see the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Horticulture Department acting quickly to address issues. Recently, the department responded positively by removing weeds from a stretch of footpath on Raj Bhavan Road. The BBMP Horticulture Department swiftly responded to repair and restore the broken and rusted charkha of Mahatma Gandhi at Mahatma Gandhi Park. Bangalore Mirror published a story titled "2 days of respect, rest wears out in neglect" on June 27, 2024, describing how Mahatma Gandhi Park, considered one of the city's important parks, is being neglected by the authorities concerned.

Bangalore Mirror
BBMP Horticulture Dept not bothered about upkeep of Mahatma Gandhi Park — lights are missing or broken and statues are getting chipped away
2 DAYS OF RESPECT, REST WEARS OUT IN NEGLECT

Horticulture department swiftly addresses neglect: clears weeds on Raj Bhavan Road and investigates missing lights

When informed about the condition of the charkha and missing lights, BBMP Superintendent (Horticulture) Vijayakumar assured to investigate the issue. Now, Vijayakumar has enlisted artisans to repair the rusted and broken charkha two days ago.

An artisan fixing the broken charkha at Mahatma Gandhi Park

Many people, especially park visitors, have expressed appreciation for the prompt action taken by the BBMP Horticulture Department. "I work at a private company on Kasturba Road. I have been visiting the park during the lunch hour. I noticed broken charkha and missing bulbs but could not complain to the BBMP authorities. Now, I am very happy to see charkha in good condition. I want to thank the BBMP Horticulture Department for fixing this problem," said Nanjunda Swamy.

Nagaraju K, a visitor, has demanded that the BBMP Horticulture Department inspect Mahatma Gandhi Park once a month. He emphasised that authorities should take greater care in maintaining parks named after great figures. "I urge the BBMP Horticulture Department to maintain the park and ensure no damage to the statues installed at the park. I urge the authorities to restore water fountains and replace any fused or missing bulbs," said Nagaraju.

Blaming the authorities for neglecting maintenance at Mahatma Gandhi Park, visitor Kiran Kumar emphasised the urgent need to replace old benches and rusted water pipes at the water fountains, citing the high foot traffic the park receives. "It will be pleasant for pedestrians, especially for visitors, if the authorities ensure water fountains are working and all lights at the park are on in the evening," said Kiran Kumar. The BBMP Superintendent (Horticulture) plans to notify the electrical department about the missing and fused bulbs at the park.

whatsapp MIRROR 9591233247

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Dangerous parking
RT Nagar

A bus has been recklessly parked at a blind turning corner on the 12th cross of RT Nagar, posing a safety hazard for those using the street and its proximity to the nearby school poses an additional threat to students travelling.

Broken footpath
Koramangala

The footpath along the main road of Koramangala-Indoor Stadium, specifically the 80-feet stretch, has deteriorated significantly posing a hazard for pedestrians attempting to navigate safely.

Pedestrians' occupied space - KR Puram

Illegal stalls are set up daily just outside the gate of the BBMP office in KR Puram, blocking the road and forcing pedestrians to walk on the street as the footpath is occupied.

Groundwater levels plummet across Bengaluru taluks

Illegal borewell digging and rapid urbanisation blamed as experts warn of looming water crisis; groundwater now as deep as 80 metres in some areas

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Groundwater levels across all nine taluks in Bengaluru's Urban and Rural districts plummeted in May this year, according to the recent groundwater level fluctuation report by the Groundwater Directorate Bangalore.

As per the report, the groundwater table in Bengaluru South, Bengaluru West, Bengaluru North, Yelahanka, Anekal, Doddaballapur, Devanahalli, and Hoskote taluks has receded and dropped by more than 4 metres below ground level compared to the same month last year. In Bengaluru East, the drop in the water level is nearly two metres.

The report also highlights that in the last ten years, the average water levels across all nine taluks have receded between 2 metres and 4 metres below ground level during May.

According to the report, the groundwater in most of the taluks is now available at 20-40 metres below ground level. In some taluks, such as Hoskote, it is reachable at 60-80 metres below ground level.

Experts say the need of the hour is to prevent illegal borewell digging. The city has lacs of illegal borewells, and this endless extraction is leading to further depletion of groundwater, which is already overexploited.

FILE PHOTO

> **"There are reports of friction between commercial borewell businesses and villagers over depleting water levels in the villages already**
> –Sandeep Anirudhan, Namma Whitefield

Due to uncontrolled extraction, the aquifers, which were once 30-100 feet, are now 1500 to 2000 feet deep.

"Cauvery scheme meets only half the requirement of water. The rest is met by groundwater. There are an estimated 5 lakh illegal borewells in the city, which is already surviving on a lifeline - water tankers from the city's peripheral areas and beyond, from villages surrounding Bengaluru. There are reports of friction between commercial borewell businesses and villagers over depleting water levels in the villages already, which will surely lead to a water war between urban and rural areas soon," said Sandeep Anirudhan of Namma Whitefield.

Moreover, since the extraction rate is much higher than recharge, the balance is bound to drop gradually, opine ecologists. They add that the unprecedented increase in impervious surfaces due to rapid urbanisation is one of the reasons behind depleting groundwater levels.

According to Anirudhan, it is also an outcome of the unplanned development of the city. While Bengaluru has water abundance in the city, due to short-sighted policies and a lack of holistic planning, we allow our water to drain away.

"The city receives rainfall between 20-25 TMC per year and it has its traditional ways to harvest it through lakes and percolation through water sponges such as marshes, wetlands, and porous soil. However, these mediums have been destroyed. Instead, we are chasing water from faraway resources, which are both expensive and energy-consuming. It is an age of ignorant governance," he added.

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PG owner arrested for revenge posting

City police have arrested a PG owner for uploading a woman's phone number on the Locanto site to seek revenge after she gave his PG a bad rating on Google. The police explained that a 25-year-old engineer started receiving unsolicited calls, with people asking her for inappropriate services. Embarrassed and distressed, she discovered that her number had been posted on the Locanto site. She filed a complaint with the CEN East police station, Shivajinagar.

Authorities traced the details through an email ID and IP address, identifying the WiFi and the device used. The trail led them to a PG near Seshadripuram. It was revealed that the woman had visited the PG for admission two weeks prior, but decided not to stay as the PG was not in a good condition. Hence, she demanded her money back. After being refused a refund, she left a negative review, post which the owner, Anand Sharma, decided to seek revenge by posting her phone number online. Sharma, who runs the PG near Seshadripuram Law College, has been arrested and sent to judicial custody.

A police official said, "In today's digital age, women must exercise caution when sharing personal information, especially online. While reviews can be helpful, sharing personal experiences online should be done with an awareness of potential backlash. Utilise privacy settings to limit who can view your contact details and consider using temporary or secondary phone numbers when dealing with new accommodations. If harassment occurs, do not hesitate to report the incident to the authorities. Document any inappropriate behaviour and seek support from friends, family, or legal counsel."

Hail auto: 1.5 lakh more permits, mostly green, planned

Govt's move aims to boost public transport, manage pollution; Critics worry about traffic congestion, and financial strain on drivers

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The Karnataka government has announced a significant increase in auto-rickshaw permits in Bengaluru, planning to add 1.5 lakh new permits over the next five years to meet the growing demand for public transportation and help manage air and noise pollution. Currently, Bengaluru has a cap of 1,55,000 auto-rickshaw permits.

The new permits will require auto-rickshaws to be equipped with LPG, CNG, or electric kits, digital fare metres, and BS-4 engines, in line with the government's push for a greener and more efficient public transport system.

Existing permit holders are not eligible for the new permits, and applicants must have a valid driving license along with supporting documents such as an Aadhaar Card, voter ID, or PAN card. The increase in permits aims to provide more transportation options for the public and reduce competition among auto-rickshaw drivers, promoting environmental and safety standards.

Sameer H, an auto driver, expressed support for the initiative, highlighting the benefits of increased transportation options and the potential to alleviate the strain on other public transport systems like buses and the metro. He also noted the environmental

advantages of the new standards, stating, "With Bengaluru's population steadily rising, the need for more accessible and efficient transportation options is critical. By increasing the number of auto-rickshaws, the government is providing commuters with more choices, potentially reducing the strain on other forms of public transport like buses and the metro. Furthermore, the inclusion of stringent environmental standards for the new permits, such as the requirement for LPG, CNG, or electric kits and BS-4 engines, is a significant step towards a greener city."

"This move will create new job opportunities, providing livelihoods for thousands of new drivers. It also ensures that existing drivers face less competition from unregulated or unauthorised auto-rickshaws, as the new permits are issued in a controlled and systematic manner," Sameer added.

However, there are concerns about the decision. Critics argue that adding 1,50,000 more auto-rickshaws could worsen the city's traffic congestion, which is already a significant issue in Bengaluru. They also raise environmental concerns, suggesting that the increase in vehicles might negate the benefits of higher emission standards.

The financial burden on aspiring auto-rickshaw drivers is another worry, along with the exclusion of existing permit holders from the new permits. Mohammed Pasha, an auto driver, voiced these concerns, stating, "There are also environmental concerns. While the new autos will meet higher emission standards, the sheer increase in the number of vehicles could offset these benefits. More vehicles on the road might lead to increased air pollution and noise levels, contradicting the objective of creating a cleaner city. Moreover, the financial burden on aspiring auto-rickshaw drivers could be significant. Lastly, some existing auto-rickshaw drivers feel left out, as they are not eligible for the new permits. They argue that the government should focus on improving conditions and incentives for current permit holders rather than expanding the number of permits, which might dilute their earnings and lead to increased competition in an already saturated market," added Mohammed Pasha, an auto driver.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Misinformation trouble

Union Minister V Somanna recently faced a major embarrassment during a felicitation program. In the midst of the event, he received what he believed to be breaking news about the passing of a senior BJP stalwart. Somanna, claiming to have gotten the information from senior leaders in Delhi, dramatically halted the festivities and called for a moment of silence in honor of the leader. However, the mood quickly shifted when it was revealed that the news was merely a rumour and the senior BJP leader was actually receiving treatment in a hospital. Somanna, realising the mistake, promptly apologised for the error. He expressed both relief and gratitude, wishing the senior BJP leader a long and healthy life, and added, "May he be with us for many more years."

Clarification request

With Darshan lodged in jail, his wife Vijayalakshmi has reportedly made a special request to Police Commissioner B. Dayananda and Home Minister G. Parameshwara. According to sources, Vijayalakshmi has asked that they refrain from referring to Pavithra Gowda, who has been named as A1 in the Renukaswamy murder case, as Darshan's wife.
Recently, both the commissioner and the Home Minister addressed Gowda as Darshan's wife during media interactions, which has allegedly angered Vijayalakshmi. This prompted her to request that Gowda be referred to simply as Darshan's friend, rather than his wife.

Beyond politics

The feud between former BJP MLA CT Ravi and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had tongues wagging. When Siddaramaiah subtly targeted Ravi during his campaign in Chikkamagaluru, Ravi didn't hold back in his response. Naturally, everyone was eager to witness their interaction at the swearing-in ceremony where Ravi assumed office as MLC. After Ravi took his oath as an MLC on Monday last, he approached the Chief Minister and humbly touched his feet seeking blessings. To everyone's surprise, Siddaramaiah greeted him with a warm smile, presenting a bouquet, patting his back affectionately, and even gesturing to touch his ears in a friendly manner. This incident goes to show that beyond the political banter, there exists a personal rapport and mutual respect between the two, proving that there's more to their relationship than meets the eye.

No questions please...

Earlier, HD Kumaraswamy faced a barrage of media inquiries regarding his nephew Prajwal Revanna's involvement in a scandal. Now, another nephew, Suraj Revanna, finds himself embroiled in a similar situation. Surprisingly, this time around, HDK has remained tight-lipped, prompting journalists to probe him about his reaction. A visibly irked HDK retorted, "As a union minister, I'm here to address queries related to my ministry or the state's development. I won't comment on personal matters." He also hinted at a possible conspiracy, suggesting that time would unveil the truth. This response from HDK added fuel to the speculations surrounding the incidents involving his nephews.

Junior v/s senior

A lively rivalry has ignited between political heavyweights DK Shivakumar (DKS) and HD Kumaraswamy (HDK) over who holds the seniority in politics. DKS initially showed deference, calling HDK his "anna" (elder brother) due to HDK's age. However, at a recent event in Mangaluru, DKS switched gears, asserting his political seniority by noting that he ran for office as early as 1985, while HDK entered the political arena later. Responding to journalists, HD Kumaraswamy acknowledged his later entry in 1995-96 but pointed out his deep-rooted political involvement. "In 1985, while DKS was running against Deve Gowda, I was managing the campaign for my father in Sathanur," HDK remarked, emphasizing that his political experience and contributions make him equally senior to DKS. This dynamic exchange adds another layer of intrigue to the already competitive political landscape.

Delhi's traffic jam

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar recently visited Delhi, where he was greeted by officials at Karnataka Bhavan. During a casual discussion, Shivakumar mentioned that he would have arrived earlier but was delayed by the heavy rainfall that hit Delhi last Friday. An official remarked that the city's infrastructure had been exposed by just two hours of rain. Shivakumar quickly corrected him, explaining that it was actually four hours of rain that had brought the national capital to a standstill, with roads completely jammed. This incident prompted Shivakumar to recall his previous statements about Bengaluru's traffic woes. He pointed out that many critics unfairly paint Bengaluru as notorious for its traffic jams, yet he has observed worse congestion in many other cities, including Delhi.
According to Shivakumar, it is the negative press that has earned Bengaluru its infamous reputation. His observations highlighted the universal challenge of urban traffic management and the role media perceptions play in shaping a city's image. **–Sridhar Vivan**

BJP leader urges free dengue testing

Amid reports of a spike in dengue cases in the state, Leader of Opposition in the Karnataka Assembly, R Ashoka, on Sunday urged the government to declare it an "emergency situation" and make testing free.

The BJP leader also stressed the need to set up a task force in every taluk and a control room, among other measures, to monitor and control the dengue spread.

"Dengue cases have been on the rise in the state since January. Two children have died due to dengue, and there are reports of three to four deaths due to dengue every day, which is painful. There is fear among people across the state, but the government is not afraid yet," Ashoka said. While speaking to reporters after visiting a government hospital and meeting infected patients and doctors, he said, "13-14 per cent among the hundred samples checked are being confirmed for dengue, and there are reports of more deaths among those suffering from comorbidities.

"So controlling dengue is important...the government should have constituted a task force in every taluk, set up a control room, and ensured the supply of medicines, which they have not done," he added. Further stating that, according to information he has gathered, more than two lakh people are infected by dengue in the state, Ashoka said the government should bear the expenses of testing.

"The way we did free testing during Covid...I urge the government to immediately make testing free. Rs 600-Rs 1,000 is being charged for testing, and the poor are unable to test," he said.

Pointing out that the government has increased taxes on everything, he said, "Free testing may cost about Rs 10 crore; is the government unable to spend that much?"
Noting that among those infected, many are children, Ashoka said, "Probably the government has not observed this. **—PTI**

CV Raman Nagar welcomes clean footpaths

BBMP along with citizen volunteers are clearing garbage and painting compound walls in a project to beautify black spots and keep their vicinity clean

| Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Around 100 people, including volunteers from Ugly Indians, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) activists, and Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) pourakarmikas, marshals, and health officers got together on Sunday morning to clear the stretch of Malleshpalya Main Road in CV Raman Nagar constituency. Several loads of garbage and debris were cleared, and the long wall was given a fresh coat of paint.

This was the first step in a project facilitated by The Ugly Indians and launched by CV Raman Nagar MLA S Raghu. "We have taken up the beautification of black spots and painting of the compound wall as part of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. We have decided to clear the garbage and paint the compound wall between GM Palya and Vignan Nagar Bus Stand in two phases. Now we are painting the compound wall between Dr Rajkumar statue and the Vignan Nagar Bus Stand. After completion, we will take up the remaining stretch," said MLA S Raghu.

Many residents and shop owners have appreciated the initiative. They said the footpath has been used to dump garbage and attend to nature's call. "I also want the residents of this area, especially tempo and cab drivers not to create back or yellow spots in the future. It is our responsibility to keep the entire stretch clean," said Thomas P, a resident.

They claim that the painting work would be completed in three to four days. "It is not that pourakarmikas are not cleaning the footpaths but some residents and shop owners continue dumping waste on the footpath along the compound wall thus creating black spots," said Venkatesh P, a pedestrian.

"We have decided to paint to one-and-a-half kilometer-long compound wall in two phases. More than 50 volunteers and pourakarmikas have been working for the last few days to remove garbage and debris from the footpath and have removed five to six truckloads of debris and waste in the last three days," said Ravikumar, BBMP Assistant Executive Engineer (Solid Waste Management). "I want the BBMP marshals to keep vigil for more than 15 days to ensure no more black spots on the stretch," he added.

"Today's spot-fixing effort was a good example of silent direct action to fix a persistent problem that affected the entire community. Over the next few days, several more interventions are planned to achieve a permanent sustainable solution," a volunteer said.

MLA S Raghu painting the wall at Malleshpalya on Sunday

Union Budget: Infra push, structural reforms

Industry leaders stress on need for reforms to drive sustainable, inclusive economic growth for India to emerge as competitive economy

With the government set to present the Union Budget 2024-25 on July 23, industry leaders and experts have reiterated the importance of structural reforms to drive sustainable and inclusive economic growth, especially the critical role of infrastructure development towards India becoming the third largest economy.

According to industry chambers, by prioritising structural reforms, strategic infrastructure development, targeted sectoral initiatives and a rationalised tax system, India can navigate current challenges and emerge as a stronger, more competitive economy in the long run.

Assocham has recommended accelerating investments through public-private partnerships (PPPs) with a focus on key sectors like transportation, energy, water supply, and digital infrastructure. This will enhance connectivity, improve productivity, and bolster India's overall competitiveness.

In order to address the growing concern for environmental sustainability, the leading chamber of commerce urged the government to introduce policies and incentives that promote clean technologies, renewable energy sources, and sustainable practices across industries like agriculture, manufacturing, and transportation.

File photo of Budget 2023

"Introduce policies and incentives that promote clean technologies, renewable energy sources, and sustainable practices across industries

–Assocham

The government can further streamline regulations, expedite approvals and permits, and leverage digitalisation to attract investments and enhance operational efficiency, according to industry watchers.

According to ICRA, the government's revenue receipts are likely to witness an upward revision of Rs 1.2 trillion in the 'FY2025 Revised Budget' over the 'Interim Budget Estimate' (IBE), while pegging a relatively shallower increase in the revenue expenditure (revex) target, largely focused on the rural economy.

The rating agency expects the revenue receipts of the government to increase on the back of a higher RBI dividend and a rise in tax collections.

"The government is likely to set a fiscal deficit target at 4.9-5.0 per cent for FY2025, vis-a-vis the IBE of 5.1 per cent of GDP, without compromising the capital expenditure target of Rs. 11.1 trillion," according to ICRA.

The Budget Session of Parliament will start on July 22 and extend till August 12.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the budget at a time when the Indian economy has clocked a robust 8.2 per cent growth in 2023-24, which is the fastest among the world's major economies, and inflation coming down to below 5 per cent.

The RBI has stated that the economy is headed to an over 8 per cent growth trajectory.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already declared that "the next five years will be a decisive fight against poverty".

Meanwhile, apex business chamber CII has requested the rationalisation of stamp duty on land and phasing out the cross-subsidy on power rates to "reduce the cost of doing business".

CII has also suggested that captive power plants (CPPS) should be brought on par with the power sector for coal pricing, allocation, and transportation.

It points out that as highlighted in the National Logistics policy, the government should continue digitisation aiming towards paperless logistics to save significant time and cost. **–IANS**

Pre-Budget consultation meetings conclude

The Finance Ministry concluded the Pre-Budget consultations for the Union Budget 2024-25, which began on June 19, 2024.

These meetings were chaired by Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman.

A press release by the Ministry of Finance on Sunday stated that over 120 invitees from 10 stakeholder groups participated in the in-person consultations.

Among these stakeholders, the experts and representatives from farmer associations and agriculture economists, trade unions, the education and health sectors, employment and skilling, MSMEs, trade and services, industry, economists, the financial sector and capital markets, as well as the infrastructure, energy, and urban sectors participated.As part of budget deliberations, the Finance Minister also convened a meeting with the Finance Ministers of the states in the national capital.

During the first meeting with the Union Finance Minister, the economists discussed several critical issues among them boosting capital expenditure and reducing the fiscal deficit were highlighted.

The group of economists suggested to the ministry that the focus should be on reducing the fiscal deficit in the upcoming budget, adding the issue of the need to generate employment growth.

Economists meet Fin Min, discuss critical issues among them boosting capital expenditure and reducing the fiscal deficit highlighted

The industry body Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) suggested the government increase capital expenditure in the upcoming budget. The economists also emphasised on the need to enhance the capital expenditure.

In another meeting, the farmer associations suggested the government enhance the budgetary allocation for the agriculture sector. The agriculture economists and farmers association also demanded to review the current budgetary allocations.

The trade and services industry representatives demanded the policies for the exports and trade meanwhile they suggested the government review the Interest Equalisation Scheme, ease of doing business, and enhance R&D initiatives. The issue of employment was also raised during the meeting. **–ANI**

BM Finance Fundas

Consumer Connect Initiative

13 allowances of central govt employees to hike by 25%

Central government employees have been granted a 4% raise in their Dearness Allowance (DA), bringing it up to 50%. In tandem, the Dearness Relief (DR) for central government retirees has also been boosted by 4% to 50% to cushion rising prices' impact. Consequently, there will be a substantial increase in the salaries and pensions of central government employees. This is effective from January 1, 2024.

Now that DA has touched the 50% mark, certain other allowances will also increase. These allowances include House Rent Allowance (HRA).

According to a circular issued by the Department of Personnel and Training on July 4, 2024, "Attention is drawn to the following orders issued by Department of Expenditure/DoPT in the past and request that consequent upon increase of Dearness Allowance by 4% to 50% w.e.f. 01.01.2024, the payments of the following allowances whereever applicable may be made at enhanced rates of 25% over the existing rates w.e.f. 01.01.2024."

When the dearness allowance payable on the revised pay structure goes up by 50%, the allowance rates will increase by 25%.

Here is a look at the allowances that will see a 25% increase now that DA has been hiked to 50%. The higher rates for these allowances will be effective January 1, 2024.

Tough Location Allowance

Some geographical-based allowances, such as Special Compensatory (Remote Locality) Allowance (SCRLA), Sunderban Allowance, and Tribal Area Allowance, have been combined into Tough Location Allowance. The regions under TLA have been divided into three categories. The tariffs will be determined by the different cells of the R&H Matrix and will vary from Rs.1000 to Rs.5,300 per month.

Conveyance Allowance

The Ministry of Finance updated its list of grants and allowances for employees in the Central Government in July 2017. The implementation of the Seventh Pay Commission, or 7 CPC, was closely related to this.

For child of women with disabilities

For providing extra benefits to women employees with disabilities especially when they have young children and children with disabilities, it has been decided that women with disabilities shall be paid Rs. 3000/- per month on Special Allowance for child care. The allowance shall be payable from the time of the child's birth till the child is two years old.

Children education

Consequent upon the decisions taken by Government to implement the recommendation of 7th CPC, this department has issued an OM No. A-27012/01/2017-Estt.(AL) dated 17.07.2018. The salient features of CEA are:

(i) CEA/Hostel Subsidy can be claimed only for the two eldest surviving children.

(iii) The amount of hostel subsidy is Rs. 6,750/- per month.

(iv) The reimbursement of CEA for Divyang Children of Government servant shall be payable at double the normal rate of CEA i.e. Rs. 4500/- per month. In a case where Divyang Child is not able to attend school, the reimbursement of CEA for availing education / special education at residence, shall be made at double the normal rates of CEA subject to production of payment receipted by teacher/instructor etc. and self-certification by the Central Government servant for availing education of their child at his/her residence.

(v) The rate of CEA would be raised by 25% every time the DA on the revised pay structure goes up by 50%.

(vi) The CEA and Hostel subsidy is admissible in respect of children studying from three classes before class one to 12th standard in accordance.

–By Sneha Kulkarni, ET Online

Gig workers' bill: Extension of period of consultation sought

These are complex concepts that require time to understand and send comprehensive suggestions on, says charitable trust

The Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF), a charitable trust working on privacy protections, digital security, and individual freedoms in the digital age, has written to the commissioner of the Labour Department, requesting to extend the period of consultation for the Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2024.

The draft Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2024 was published on the official website of the Karnataka State Unorganized Workers Social Security Board on June 29 with a deadline of 10 days from the date of publication for submitting objections or suggestions on its contents. IFF has pointed out that the 10-day period is inadequate and has urged the department to extend the deadline to submit comments beyond the stated deadline.

"Platformisation of gig work and reliance on automated monitoring and decision making systems are complex technological concepts with socio-legal repercussions on worker welfare that require time to understand and send comprehensive recommendations on. An extended period to submit comments will give stakeholders the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the draft Bill and participate in the consultation process, which will ultimately help the Board strengthen the draft," IFF said in the letter.

It noted that open and meaningful consultation processes are important for democratic decision-making in line with the Pre-legislative Consultation Policy, 2014. They have urged the department to issue an extension of a minimum of 30 days for the consultation period from the day of notifying the extension.

Additionally, they noted that the draft Bill was not advertised or published on key websites of the Karnataka Government, such as the main Karnataka Government webpage, the Department of Information and Public Relations, or the Department of Labour, though the Board website linked on the Department website carries a notification inviting suggestions, the main Department website does not. They have urged the board to re-issue the draft Bill on key government websites with a fresh, extended public consultation period.

"We further request the Board to make the responses/objections/suggestions it receives on the draft Bill public, keeping personal information of the responders redacted, as that would ensure meaningful engagement and participation by stakeholders and allow for better analysis, understanding, and fair critique of the various perspectives put forward. Publishing submissions sets healthy precedents for public consultations under the PLCP as well. Additionally, we urge the Board to allow for counter-comments on the responses received in the interest of democracy and transparency," the letter said. **BMB**

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I Pooja Abole D/O, Nagendra R/o House No. 4, Church Street Camp, Belgaum - 590001 have changed my name to Pooja Madhav Urankar.

MISSING

MISSING

Satyanarayana Age 60, Missing from Banashankari, Bangalore, Mentally retarded. Suitable reward is considered. *Wearing Purple Shirt and Grey Jeans*
Contact: **9986450482**

GALLERIA

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Mosquito breeding grounds of B'luru

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

With no attempts to clear the garbage, the accumulated slush has also turned a breeding place for mosquitoes. What is more, the vacant site is being used by people as an open urinal.

"What is the use of organising awareness programmes on dengue fever without addressing the problem of black spots and mosquito breeding places? There are some abandoned buildings and vacant sites in Gandhinagar. The BBMP officials should issue notices to the owners of such properties to keep vacant sites and abandoned buildings clean to prevent the spread of dengue in the city," said Jagadeesh K, a pedestrian.

The other black spot is the flyover at Kempegowda Bus Station. Though the KSRTC and BMTC managements have been taking measures to keep the place clean, there is no shortage of black spots here. One can find stagnant dirty water on both sides of the flyover near the passenger subway. The presence of barricades at these black spots is amusing to health-conscious pedestrians. "Thousands of people use this flyover every day. The KSRTC or BMTC authorities have to inspect the premises to identify black spots and take measures to beautify such spots," said Prasanna Kumar, a BMTC commuter.

There is no shortage for black spots that are contributing to the spread of dengue cases in the city. For example, a vacant site between Royal Heritage apartment complex and a business complex on Old Madras Road was a major health hazard. The place was full of weeds and garbage.

Bangalore Mirror published a story – Navigating neglect: Old Madras Road's grave pathway problems – on September 5, 2023, narrating how the footpath is blocked and the adjacent vacant site is being used as an open urinal. Though the BBMP officials took measures to remove garbage from the vacant site, nothing has been done to avoid stagnation of water near the entrance of Pai Layout on Old Madras Road.

"I expect the BBMP health department and solid waste management departments to work overtime to ensure vacant sites and footpaths are free from any nuisance. It will be good for the majority of citizens if the storm water drains department acts tough against those letting sewage and dirty water into the drains," said Manjunath N, a pedestrian.

Expressing concern over the state of the area along the railway track, Shobha, a resident of Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, said that there is thick growth of grass, weeds and lantana bushes along the track.

"No action is taken to remove stagnant water, sewage on the footpath, or clear garbage heaps and overgrown weeds from the vacant sites. It seems the BBMP doesn't work on this side of the railway track and doesn't care about the rising cases of dengue," said Shobha.

Speeding said to be biggest reason for fatalities

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Speed kills

Traffic officials attribute the high rate of accident deaths in the North Division to speeding. "One of the major reasons for the increase in accident deaths is speeding by riders/drivers. Due to several factors, we are seeing more people speeding in North Bengaluru than anywhere in the rest of Bengaluru.

We have seen that out of the majority of cases of accident deaths, they were even wearing ISI helmets. It can only be surmised that the rider was speeding at a rate that even helmets can't protect the rider from the impact of the fall," said a senior traffic official.

Traffic officials also noted that routine construction on stretches and an ever-developing Bengaluru North has also added to the problem. "Due to constant construction work, there is a constant change in traffic flow. While one stretch is cordoned off and alternative routes are devised, another stretch gets barricaded.

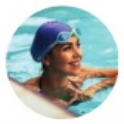
This pattern is also pushing the riders to find alternatives in narrow subroads. It is also inevitable that due to the growth of North Bengaluru, there is a massive increase in traffic density. Compared to other parts of Bengaluru, the North is a fairly newly developing part.

The traffic density is not proportional to existing road infrastructure. With the personnel being diverted to managing traffic, there has been reduced enforcement. Without stringent enforcement, the traffic violations are rising," they added.

Traffic officials told BM that there is also a dearth of enforcement mechanisms on this stretch. "To address speeding, there should be cameras installed on the stretch to catch the culprits.

We also need other civic agencies like BBMP, NHAI, and State Highways authorities to take the required action to address the issue. To address accident deaths due to crossing on highways, BBMP should provide foot overbridges to facilitate easier crossing of pedestrians. Additionally, mass transport should be made more available in these parts to reduce the congestion and accidents," they added.

HEALTH TIP: Jumping rope engages multiple muscle groups, including the legs, core, arms, and shoulders



Regular swimming can boost metabolism, helping the body burn calories more efficiently even when at rest

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The name is bond

10 tips to maintain strong interpersonal relationships

Humans are social animals; we depend on our interpersonal relationships to learn, grow, and seek comfort. We need friends, siblings, colleagues, relatives, and even romantic partners to nurture our life and growth. Maintaining them can prove to be daunting but it's not something you cannot manage! You need to keep the basic foundation stone of your interpersonal relationships solid to sustain strong interpersonal relationships.

1. Respect Other People's Space

Being committed to each other doesn't mean you need to be joined at the hip all the time. Instead, give each other space. So, even if you or your partner or friend need some 'me-time', you do not hold a grudge against each other for that. Similarly, if you find that your friend has not called you for a good 10 days or has forgotten to respond to your text, don't jump the gun. Ask what happened, and talk it out.

Tip: If you feel the person in question is finding your presence too overwhelming, kindly move away and keep a distance.

2. Be A Great Listener

To be able to survive and sustain long standing relationships, you need to be an extremely good listener. Never try to talk the other person down; it reflects badly on you. Let the person finish what he or she has to say, understand what their point is, and then respond. Paying attention while your friends, family members or colleagues speak makes a good impression and helps you socially.

Tip: Try to let the person finish and then put your point across.

3. Respect One Another In The Relationship

Respecting each other's wishes and respecting one another even in their absence is vital to a good foundation for a relationship. You should never gossip about your partner or friend, or air your dirty laundry. Disagreements are something that you solve between yourselves without getting your friends or family involved. During disagreements, you must feel able to voice your opinion.

Tip: Understand each other's priorities and necessities, this will help you gain insight into your relationship.

4. Be Honest

Honesty helps establish trust in a relationship. At times, it could be difficult to be honest with your partner or friend.

However, keep in mind that both of you are committed to understanding, listening and encouraging honesty. After all, you would rather hear the inconvenient truth from your partner than from a third person.

Tip: If you feel some issue bothering you, take it up with the person immediately.

5. It's Healthy To Argue In A Relationship

Many believe that arguments are unhealthy for a relationship. While that is true to an extent, it's not entirely correct. It's natural to disagree on various topics, but it's more important to agree to disagree. It allows you to understand your partner's perspective and, hence, gives each of you room for improvement if need be.

6. Take Responsibility For Your Behaviour

If you are someone who owns up to your faults and works on not repeating them, you are taking a huge load off the relationship. More often than not, relationships crumble due to this reason. Acknowledging your mistakes will signal your understanding and interest in self-growth, and benefit the relationship.

Tip: As soon as you realise the argument was your fault, own up and apologise. Save yourself days of discomfort and awkwardness.

> "You need to keep the basic foundation stone of your interpersonal relationships solid to sustain strong interpersonal relationships

7. Say 'No'

As much as it's necessary to agree on things mutually, it's also very essential to disagree. You have to figure out a way to say 'no' that not only serves the purpose but also doesn't end in an argument. You must be able to be open about what you think and not afraid to voice your opinions and feelings; this ability is important to hold the relationship together.

Tip: If things don't fit with your moral compass or liking, be unafraid to ignore them or to say 'no'!

8. Spend Quality Time Together

It is not necessary that you spend most of your time with your partner. Spending time with your family, siblings, friends, peers or even neighbours for that matter is a refreshing change and gives you different perspectives in life. Spend quality time with your loved ones as much as possible and whenever possible. You foster bonds that are meant to last for life this way.

Tip: Look for those little things that you can do together—cooking, watching a movie, walking, or even a fun game night.

9. Connect With Your Family Often

Engage your parents or your children by getting them off their everyday routine.

Plan an activity for the day and ensure that everybody participates. Be it a game of cards, a board game, dumb charades, or karaoke, push each family member to bring their best. Melbourne-based human resources management student Shruti Pednekar shares how she likes to spend family time at home: "All of us love old songs and use this time to listen to all our favourite ones together in the evening and to sing along. It is soothing and therapeutic.

Discussing the news, politics, education, current affairs, books, and each other's careers keeps us occupied and updated while learning something new," she says.

Tip: Look at those photo albums that are tucked away in the corners of your wardrobes. Relive old memories!

10. Bridge That Distance

While some of us live with our families, others live away from their parents or siblings in nuclear families or due to work commitments. This leaves them with no choice but to be connected via virtual modes. Bengaluru-based Radhika Mehta*, a financial analyst, says it has been difficult to live away from family. "My parents live in Dharwad while I work in Bengaluru. My family is more stressed about my well-being as I live all by myself. To alleviate that, I speak to my parents at least twice a day and update them about my day. We also schedule a video call. They are reassured that I am doing fine," says Mehta.

Tip: Get on that video call as often as you can to be well-connected.

-Aishwarya Acharya, Femina

All you need to know about...

Gen Z dating terms

TEXTATIONSHIP
Honestly, this one's like the ex that keeps popping into your life, surfacing in the realm of dating every now and then. It's as literal as it sounds: a relationship that is entirely based on 24/7 texting with no in-person interaction. Want to chat? They're always available. Want to meet up? Uhuh, they've got to run!

AFFORDATING
Remember Sia's iconic Cheap Thrills? We Indians turned that vibe into Sasti Masti – and this dating trend captures it perfectly. Imagine low-cost dating activities and splitting expenses equally, ideal for those initial dates when you're just getting to know someone new.

NEXT ON DECK
The dating equivalent of having a backup plan – this term is used to refer to a person next in line and prepared to be your romantic interest if needed. Basically, someone who is ready to step in if your current relationship doesn't work out.

CASPERING
All your fond memories of Casper, the friendly ghost, will vanish once you hear about this dating trend. It involves gradually reducing communication in a way that doesn't raise suspicion, slowly fading out of someone's life. It's not outright ghosting, but we all know where it leads.

GROUNDHOGGING
Ever feel like you're trapped in a cycle of bad dates? That's called groundhogging! It's when you keep dating the same type of person, hoping for different outcomes. No judgement here, but consider Albert Einstein's words: "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."

-Sharon Dsilva, Femina

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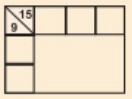
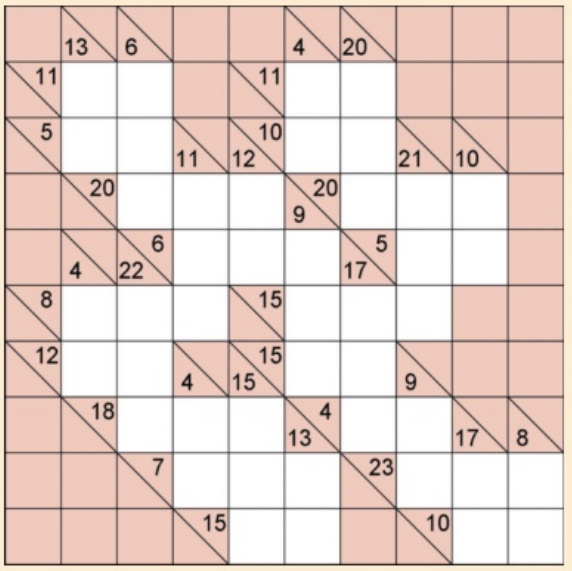
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

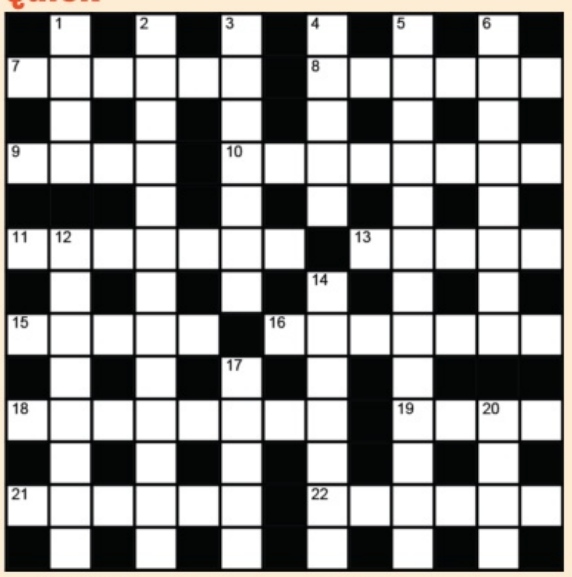
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Comic strip hero from Riverdale? (6)
8 Ice-cream dessert (6)
9 To listen to (4)
10 Protective cases for lamps or lights (8)
11 Like a pig (7)
13 Book of maps (5)
15 Totted up (5)
16 James ___ : famous author of Shogun and Tai-Pan (7)
18 Field Marshal K.M. ___ : first Indian C-in-C of Indian Army? (8)
19 Head supporter (4)
21 Arm covering (6)
22 Followed as consequence (6)

DOWN

1 Gratis (4)
2 Is a trait of (13)
3 Inner upper surface of room (7)
4 Employing (5)
5 Creativity (13)
6 Monsoon showers? (8)
12 Eccentric persons, geeks? (8)
14 Delighted (7)
17 Distressed (5)
20 Masticate (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: K EQUALS D

CN ST KWA'Q UQBAK HV NWJ MXCOKJTA, QXTA ST KWA'Q UQBAK NWJ EHMX.

Linemaro

Your hand looks heavy. Can I hold it for you?

Mindchow

Cynicism is an unpleasant way of telling the truth

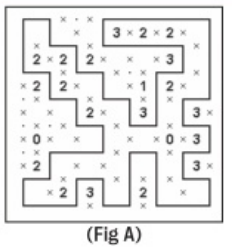
Joke of the day

'I have an obsession with wind farms.' 'Really?' 'Yes, I am a huge fan.'

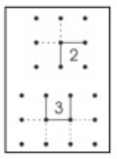
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)



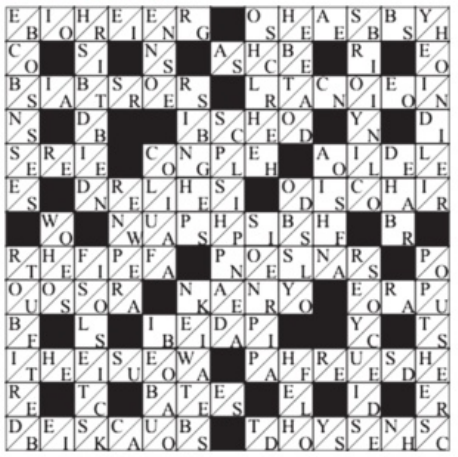
(Fig B) Not Allowed

How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

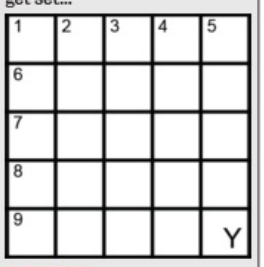
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Rotas; 6 IT eve;
7 O Bore; 8 Rille;
9 Yo lid

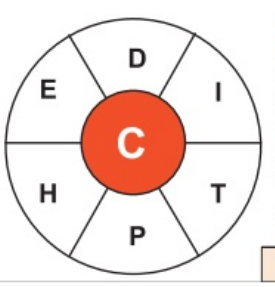
DOWN

1 Bride; 2 OO Vol;
3 A oil I; 4 Stele;
5 Retry

Mensapuzzle

Solve this brain bat:

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

11 Average; **13** Good; **15** Outstanding

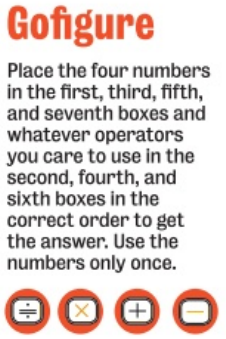
SudokuChallenge

			1					4
3	4		9			2		6
	6				7		3	
	3	7	2					
4			7		9			8
					8	7	2	
	9		6				8	
5		6			2		4	3
1					3			

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

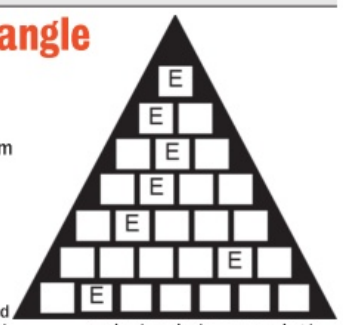
Differences: 1. Hockey stick is longer. 2. Stripe is missing from sleeve. 3. Back of chair is shorter. 4. Foot is moved. 5. Newspaper is longer. 6. Skate wheels are missing.

Riddler

Trouble's coming, so it's said. How grain can drown and grow a head. Needed for Joe to erase your sleep, For leaves in water, the path is steep. What is it?

Alpha triangle

1 Second vowel
2 tu Brute ...
3 Afternoon drink
4 199
5 Pacino/DeNiro film
5 Vital organ
6 Dad
7 Plume

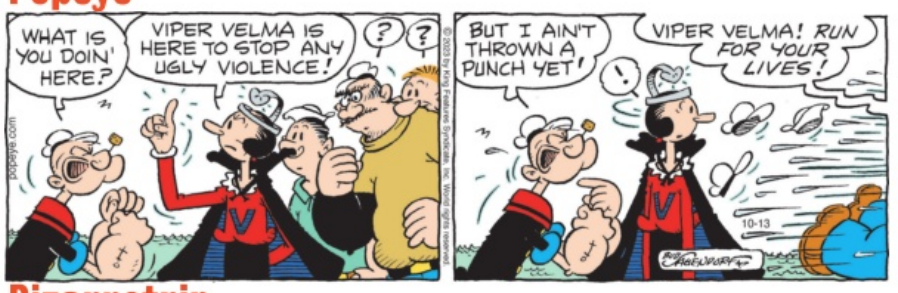


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


WHAT IS YOU DOIN' HERE?
VIPER VELMA IS HERE TO STOP ANY UGLY VIOLENCE!
BUT I AIN'T THROWN A PUNCH YET!
VIPER VELMA! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!
10-13

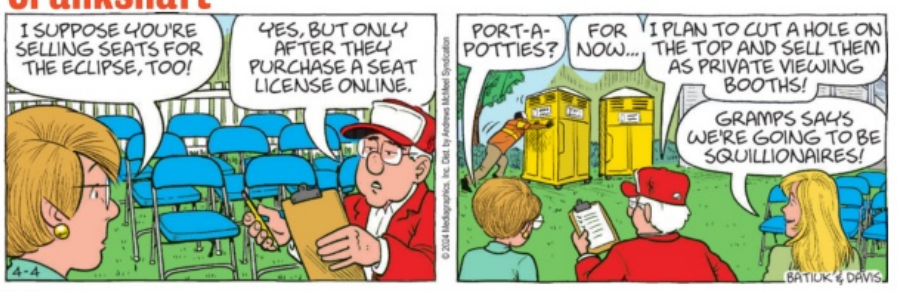
Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

LET'S GOOO!
WOOO
EEEE!
PLEASE TELL ME THAT WAS THE LAST RIDE.
THERE'S ONE MORE LEFT, BUT IT'S OKAY IF YOU WANNA QUIT.
QUIT! NEVER SAY THAT WORD TO ME AGAIN! LET'S GO!

Crankshaft


I SUPPOSE YOU'RE SELLING SEATS FOR THE ECLIPSE, TOO!
YES, BUT ONLY AFTER THEY PURCHASE A SEAT LICENSE ONLINE.
PORT-A-POTTIES?
FOR NOW...
I PLAN TO CUT A HOLE ON THE TOP AND SELL THEM AS PRIVATE VIEWING BOOTHS!
GRAMPS SAYS WE'RE GOING TO BE SQUILLIONAIRES!
4-4
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today you may be very happy, your losses may convert into profits. Your seniors may be happy and appreciate your work. You may likely have some changes in your place, position or responsibilities at work, in terms of promotions. Your opponents and hidden enemies may be under control now. Singles and love birds may make important decisions in terms of marriage with the help of relatives or friends.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today you are blessed by the positive moon, your health may be good today. You may likely go to a religious place with your family or friends. You may plan to donate some amount to a religious place or a charity. Property-related deals may likely be done. You may plan for overseas travel related to work.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
: Today, you may be a victim of conspiracies. You should avoid being involved in controversies, your strong willpower and blessings from elders may protect you from this critical situation. You are advised to avoid making arguments in your love life. You should also avoid rash driving or any adventurous tour.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today you may be happy. You may experience peace of mind. Your focus towards your goals would be good. You may likely have a romantic moment with your spouse. Your bonding with your spouse may be stronger now. You will also be busy with other domestic issues.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today you may be more enthusiastic. Your performance at work may be good, it may boost your terms with seniors, and you may likely get some new responsibilities in terms of promotions. In legal matters, you may hear good news. Your opponents and hidden enemies may be under control.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you might find it easy to complete difficult tasks, boosting your confidence. Your past investments may pay you good gains. You are advised to avoid arguments on worthless topics, it may waste your precious time.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today is not a good day. You may feel unhappy and you may be dissatisfied with your current situation. You are advised to be patient and avoid making any hasty decisions. You are advised to take care of your parents.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you may be enthusiastic. Your focus towards your goals may be very good. You may easily achieve your target. You are likely to go for short work-related trips, which may give you benefits shortly. Your colleagues and friends may help you in the completion of some important projects.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today you are blessed by Jupiter and the moon. You may expect to get some rewards on behalf of your social services. you are appreciated by your seniors, you may also get promotions. Your losses may convert into profits now, which will increase liquidity in the business. You plan to invest more capital into the family business, which will lead to its growth in the near future.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may feel happy. Your good health may provide you with inner strength and self-confidence. Your consciousness may prevent you from manipulating difficult tasks, helping you maintain your reputation in your environment. Your social prestige will likely be increased.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today you may be disappointed. You are advised to control your arrogance; otherwise, you may face losses due to your words when speaking with others. Love birds should be careful in discussion otherwise, relations may be affected.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, your mind may be at peace. You may plan to invest some capital in the business, which may increase liquidity in your business. Your earnings may boost your financial health. You may enjoy romantic moments with your spouse, which may enhance harmony in the family life. Singles may likely find a suitable match. Love birds may decide to get married. Students will be blessed by good karma.

KIDZONE

Raksha MS, 8 Years, B.Mona High School

Kavyashree, 8 Years, Swamy Vivekananda School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
$\sqrt{(28+7+5i-11)} = \sqrt{(24+120)}$
$= \sqrt{144} = 12$

RIDDLER Brewing

STRIKE OUT

B	O	R	I	N	G	S	H	A	B	B	Y			
S	A	B	R	E	S	R	A	C	O	O	N			
S	B	I	C	E	D	N	E	D						
E	R	E	O	G	L	E	A	I	D	E				
S	D	E	L	H	I	O	S	C	A	R				
O	W	A	S	P	I	S	H	B						
T	H	I	E	F	P	O	L	A	R	P				
U	S	S	R	K	E	N	O	E	A	U				
F	L	B	E	D	I	C	S							
T	H	E	S	E	A	A	F	R	E	S	H			
E	T	A	T	E	L	D	E							
D	I	S	C	U	S	D	O	Y	E	N	S			

FAST FIVE

R	O	A	S	T
E	V	I	T	E
B	O	O	E	R
I	L	L	E	R
D	O	I	L	Y

QUOTE UNCODE
If we don't stand up for children, then we don't stand for much.

QUICK

F	C		U	I		R								
A	R	C	H	I	E		S	U	N	D	A	E		
H	E	A	R		L	A	N	T	E	R	N	S		
	A		I	G		N		F						
P	O	R	C	I	N	E		A	T	L	A	S		
D		T	G		P	I		L						
A	D	D	E	D		C	L	A	V	E	L	L		
	E		R	U		E								
C	A	R	I	A	P	P	A		N	E	C	K		
L	S		S	S		E		H						
S	L	E	V	E		E	N	S	U	E	D			
S		S		T		D		S		W				

MENSA PUZZLE
step father

BULL'S EYE
chide, chip, cite, cited, deplort, dice, ditch, edict, epic, etch, ethic, iced, itch, pitch, PITCHED

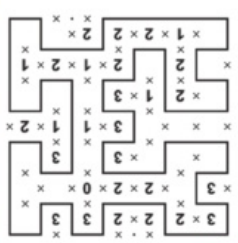
SUDOKU

7	2	8	1	3	6	9	5	4
3	4	1	9	8	5	2	7	6
9	6	5	4	2	7	8	3	1
8	3	7	2	5	1	4	6	9
4	5	2	7	6	9	3	1	8
6	1	9	3	4	8	7	2	5
2	9	3	6	1	4	5	8	7
5	7	6	8	9	2	1	4	3
1	8	4	5	7	3	6	9	2

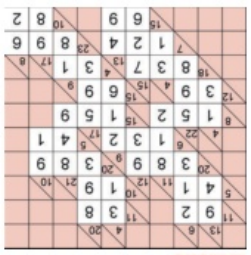
ALPHA TRIANGLE
E, Et, Tea, Heat, Heart, Father, feather.

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 7 + 4 + 9 = 27
Medium
4 + 3 x 1 + 5 = 12
Hard
2 + 7 / 1 + 3 = 12

LOOP



KAKURO



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All dressed up

Pooja Hegde has a stunning collection of strapless garments and she manages to pull it off so well

Watch this story come alive on your device by scanning this QR code

With little backing

Taapsee talks about how her co-producers abandoned film after recovering money

After marking her debut as a producer with director Ajay Bahl's horror thriller 'Blurr' in 2022, Taapsee Pannu took on a larger venture as a producer in 2023 by backing director Tarun Dudeja's road adventure drama 'Dhak Dhak.'

The project was particularly special as it was headlined by women, featuring Ratna Pathak Shah, Dia Mirza, Fatima Sana Shaikh, and Sanjana Sanghi in the lead roles.

During her interaction with Indian Express, Taapsee admitted that the film's performance upset her and that her co-producer's behavior frustrated her. She said it was very heartbreaking and clarified that she did not become a producer to pursue an alternate career.

Pannu noted that she was already doing well as an actor and could have chosen to quietly continue acting or produce films she starred in, which would have been a safer option. The actor noted that she wanted to produce films she wasn't actively part of, and 'Dhak Dhak' was a step in that direction. She explained that certain commitments were made when the film was signed, based on the market scenario at that time. However, it requires a lot of courage to stick to those commitments even as the market changes.

Pannu suggested the co-producers of 'Dhak Dhak' didn't support her film until the end. She explained that for non-big-budget films, studios often recover their money before the film hits theatres. Once they have made their money, they tend to give the film a token release, avoiding spending on advertising. Exhibitors, viewing it as a non-mass masala movie, are reluctant to spend on electricity and popcorn, resulting in the film being given odd showtimes and subpar theatres. This leads to the film being abruptly removed in the middle of the week, which left Pannu frustrated.

The actress also recalled that they began showing the film just 4-5 days after the trailer was released, and while people offered to help promote it, she didn't have the support of producers and co-producers. Instead, they were indifferent, suggesting that since the money had already been made, the film would find its audience on its own. Pannu added that the four lead women stood by the film. **–ETimes**

Huma lives the island life

Actress Huma Qureshi is currently holidaying in the Seychelles and said that she is living the "island life." Huma took to Instagram stories, where she first shared a video of herself walking on the beach. She then panned the camera to show the picturesque locale of the Seychelles.

"Living the island life," she captioned the clip. The actress then encountered a tortoise and was seen having a conversation with it. She asked the tortoise if it was "friendly" and commented that "it's the most beautiful thing ever."

"Just hanging out with my new friends #islandlife," she wrote in the caption.

After her encounter with the tortoise, she saw a snail and wrote: "Island life with HQ, obsessed with nature."

On the work front, Huma will next be seen in the film 'Gulabi', directed by Vipul Mehta. The actress will then be seen in 'Jolly LLB 3', starring Akshay Kumar. **–IANS**

Full of action and too many twists

KAADAADI (KANNADA)

3.0 RATING | ★★★★★

- **DIRECTOR** Sateesh Malempati
- **ACTORS** Aditya Shashikumar, Lavanya Sahukara, Chandini Tamilarasan, Posani, Ravi Kale, and Sravan.
- **Duration** 114 minutes
- **Certification** UA

Director Sateesh Malempati has tried to make Kaadaadi a South Indian movie with actors from the Kannada, Telugu, and Tamil film industries. The director has also tried to share the screen space among them aptly. He has come up with a mix of something for each audience, class, mass, or family, and thrown in an item song for good measure. The movie was shot mostly in Hyderabad and Goa.

But the screenplay is not crisp and the narration jumps from one scene to another without any justification. Some scenes, especially action, are far from convincing. For example, a scene where the hero gets beaten by security guards while attempting to enter a hotel along with one of the heroines appearing completely fine in the very next scene is absurd. The other scene is the hero landing behind bars in Hyderabad and in the very next scene appearing in Goa where the heroine is taking part in taekwondo competitions is pretty far-fetched too. It seems the director was in a terrible hurry to include all types of scenes and did not have time to spare for logic.

The movie begins with police inspector (Ravi Kale) visiting a crime spot where the burnt body of Janana (Lavanya Sahukara), a taekwondo player, was found. The forensic team says that some people killed Janani somewhere and dumped her mortal remains at another location. The forensic team also found that the body was burnt using petrol and kerosene.

In the next scene, the director introduces Ganapathy aka Gana (Aditya Shashikumar) who was in love with Janana and how she insisted him marry her but he preferred to be a live-in partner.

Meanwhile, he happens to meet Prathigna (Chandini Tamilarasan), an affluent woman, and decides to marry her with an evil eye on her property. Janana insists him marry her as she is two months pregnant. What happens to Janana and Gana is what Kaadaadi is all about.

As far as the performance of actors is concerned, Aditya Shashikumar is good in action and dance sequences but has to hone his skills to be better in sentimental or emotional sequences. It is not clear whether he is a hero or a villain in the movie. Two heroines – Lavayna Sahukara and Chandini Tamilarasan – provide good support. Ravi Kale, Posani, and Sravan are okay.

You can catch this movie if you have nothing else planned.

–Y Maheswara Reddy

Cut a figure

Mallika flaunted her hourglass figure in an itsy-bitsy, teeny-weeny bright yellow bikini.

The actress shared a reel on Instagram, featuring several pictures of herself.

The clip, which has Don Toliver's 'No Idea' playing, begins with her back to the camera and ends with the actress walking in her bikini, paired with a lace coverup.

"My body is bikini ready for the summer - confident, radiant, and unapologetically me," she captioned the post.

Mallika often shares videos and pictures of herself burning out calories in the gym. Recently, she posted a video of her workout routine. In the caption, she wrote: "Exercise is not just a routine for me but a celebration of what my body can achieve. The real path to fitness requires discipline and dedication."

The actress added: "The allure of easy solutions like quick fixes and artificial procedures is tempting, but genuine fitness can't be bought. It must be earned through hard work and commitment."

–IANS